

# *Wild in Wonder*

## Forest & Nature School



# Parent Handbook

2023-2024

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# Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge that the land we work, learn, and play on is a part of treaty 7 territory, which is home to diverse indigenous groups including the Kainai, the Piikani, and the Siksika, who are all a part of the Blackfoot Confederacy, as well as the Tsuu T'ina. We would also like to acknowledge that the land we are living on is a part of Metis region 3. The area of the Crowsnest Pass was traditionally used by the K'tunaxa (Kootenay) people, who now reside in southeastern British Columbia. All who reside on this land now have a shared responsibility to be its stewards. As we share in that responsibility, we seek to honour the Indigenous peoples who have been its stewards for thousands of years.

## History of Forest School Movement

Since the 1950's, Forest School has been embedded in the educational philosophy of many European countries such as Norway, Germany, Sweden, Finland and Denmark. With over ten thousand programs in the UK alone, Forest School can take many different forms and is known by many different names: Nature School, Forest Kindergarten, Outdoor School and Waldkindergarten, to name a few. In 2008, Marlene Powers, inspired by the experiences in emergent, outdoor curriculum in Europe and the UK, established the first formal forest school in Canada near Ottawa, Ontario: Carp Ridge Forest School. Since then the forest school movement has been growing steadily across the country.

Forest and Nature School is an educational ethos that believes in the value of having children lead their own learning through play in a natural environment they have repeated access to. In this setting, emergent curriculum comes from the child. This means that the topics of learning or interest emerge from the child rather than being prescribed by the adult. Forest School facilitators respond to emergent curriculum by supporting and helping the child to use a process of inquiry to expand further learning. For example, if a child becomes curious about the many bugs found under a log, a Forest School facilitator would take note and would perhaps bring magnifying glasses and a bug book to the forest the next day.

Forest School focuses on the whole child: the mental, the physical, the emotional, and the spiritual, and seeks to foster learning that occurs within each of these different parts of the child. Children also engage in risky play. Risky play is about letting the children learn boundaries for themselves. Adult support is available to each individual child, so the child can assess what feels safe in a supervised but not overbearing way.

Today there is a robust body of research that shows that forest schools are a legitimate and valuable learning environment for children. Most importantly, children are encouraged to be resilient, creative and independent, which helps their more formal learning when they enter school years and enhances their ability to navigate the challenges of day-to-day life.

# What is Forest School?

"Time in nature is not leisure time; it's an essential investment in our children's health."  
— Richard Louv, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*



## EMERGENT CURRICULUM

Emergent Curriculum is a way of supporting and expanding learning that is based on the children's interest. Emergent curriculum happens when educators believe that children who wander, wonder and play are engaged in deep learning. Children's interests and passions are respected and nurtured. Educators shift their agenda away from imparting knowledge and instead extend, integrate and expand upon the children's curiosity, problem solving, questions, and theories by providing the materials and experiences needed. A key feature of emergent curriculum is adults asking open-ended questions: "What do you think happened?", "Why do you think that is?", "Do you think you can find a way to do that?", "What materials do you need to do this task?" or "How do you think we can find out?".



## SUPPORTED RISKY PLAY / ADVENTUROUS PLAY

Being able to recognize risk, experience risk and learn how to manage risk is an important part of healthy child development. Therefore, in most instances, educators will strive to co-assess risk with the children and work together to formulate a plan to manage it. Before an activity, the educators and children will talk about how the children think they can stay safe. Children are then provided with ample opportunity to challenge themselves physically and emotionally as they navigate the outdoors (i.e. crossing logs, climbing trees, pulling branches, collaborating on fort building etc.).



## PLACE-BASED LEARNING

The key component of forest schools is that the children experience the same environment regularly over the long-term, ideally through the changing seasons. Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School sessions will take place in the same location each week in the Crowsnest Pass Alberta.

# The 6 Relationships

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LAND**

Relationship with land is about connecting to place. As children connect to a place and start to care about it, they become stewards of the land.

In explaining relationship with land, it is important to mention that Forest and Nature School has evolved since arriving in Canada because of the nature of place-based learning. Having repeated access to the same land will inevitably lead to questions about the land and its stories. Therefore, an important component of the Forest School pedagogy in Canada is to engage in Truth and Reconciliation as individuals and as a Forest School group. In a Forest School, stories about the land and its history are told, Indigenous ways of knowing are shared, and relationships with the local Indigenous people are cultivated. The Indigenous people of Canada have a rich knowledge of the land, as it was their teacher for thousands of years before colonial settlers came. As such, learning from the local Indigenous people is invaluable not only to our practice as facilitators in Forest Schools, but to us as individuals as we engage in Truth and Reconciliation.

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH POWER**

Relationship with power is about allowing the fluidity of power to exist between the adult, the child, and the earth. Power is the innate ability to make choices and to take responsibility for them. No one person has more power than the other, but the power moves between beings to help keep each other safe and full of curiosity. In Forest School, the adult seeks as much as possible for the child to hold the power because of their natural drive to make choices for themselves and to guide their own learning.

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH TRUST**

Relationship with trust is about children developing trust in themselves, each other, the adults present, and the land. Each day at Forest School, children and facilitators must trust that the land will have something to teach them and facilitators must trust the children to guide their own learning.

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH PLAY**

Relationship with play is about diving deep into different types of play to learn about the world around us. Examples include imaginative play, parallel play, and movement play.

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH STORIES**

This relationship is about using storytelling as a way to learn about the world around us.

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH RISK**

Relationship with risk is about children developing their ability to get into the 'stretch zone', where they are outside of their comfort zone and learning how to manage their own risk.

# What are the benefits?

“Time in nature is not leisure time; it's an essential investment in our children's health.”  
— Richard Louv, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*



## EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE

Children learn to assess, appreciate and take risk. Crossing logs, navigating muddy trails, and building snow forts provides them with opportunities to practice making sensible, informed decisions about how to tackle the activities and experiences they encounter. Through trial and error children learn to deal with failure and develop the resilience to keep trying: a vital skill for future academics and life-long functioning.



## FINE AND GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

Deep, whole-body play allows children to develop physically. As they move through the woodland they improve their stamina and gross motor skills. Using tools to make things, shelter-building, and ephemeral art helps them develop their fine motor skills.



## SOCIAL SKILLS

Collaborating to cross a stream, build a fort or create a game of woodland play builds confidence and self esteem in children. Forest programs are child-initiated and child-led, and this allows all children to succeed as tasks are small and manageable. Children improve their social skills through communication and problem solving with their peers and supportive adults in a safe environment.



## ECOLOGICAL LITERACY

Repeated access to the same forest location throughout the seasons enables children to connect deeply to the changing of the seasons and associated life cycles. Children develop a relationship with the land and become its stewards.

# Philosophy & Vision

At Wild in Wonder Forest and Nature School, we believe some of the most meaningful learning occurs when it is self-directed and self-motivated. We believe the natural world to be a rich environment for this learning and the growth and development of the child. We believe that every child has the right to uninterrupted and extended free time to play and express creativity within this environment. We believe in the power that risky play has to promote the healthy development of the whole child, leading to confident children who are able to assess their own risk. We believe in the power of expressing wonder and curiosity in the natural world around us.

We honour that all children are capable of directing their own learning through play. We allow children the time and space to explore their learning in the natural world around them. We foster an environment where children can feel excited and supported to engage in risky play. We note and make careful observations, and respond by supporting children in assessing risk as well as using a process of inquiry to expand their learning. We foster attitudes of respect and gratitude towards the land, and recognize it is the land that is our teacher. We strive to be stewards of the land as we have repeated exposure to the same natural environment.

Every single day we spend in the forest, our vision and mission is to support the healthy development of the whole child (physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual), and to ultimately have more children running around wild in wonder.



# About us

KARALYNN HUBBARD, DIRECTOR



My name is Karalynn Hubbard and I am the founder and lead facilitator of Wild in Wonder Forest and Nature School. I was born and raised in Southern Alberta and from a young age started to develop a love of the natural world. I graduated from the University of Lethbridge in 2019 with a combined degree in French and Education and taught French Immersion to elementary aged students for 2 years. I had a good experience being a teacher, but most days I wanted to be outside with the students learning in a less prescribed and more natural way. I also saw a great need for children to become connected to the natural world. When I was introduced to forest school, I realized that many of my values as an educator were in alignment with its educational ethos and decided to become a forest school practitioner.

As a current practitioner, I feel like I am living in alignment with my values as an educator. Every day I get to support learning through fostering inquiry and supporting child-led play. I get to provide the time and space for children to learn at their own pace. I get to share my love of nature, and provide children with the opportunity for unstructured play in natural environments their parents and grandparents enjoyed when they were young. I get to help foster an environment where the needs of the whole child can be met through interacting with the land. It is my privilege to be able to practice the forest school philosophy with the children here in the Crowsnest Pass.

If you would like to ask any questions directly to the lead facilitator of Wild in Wonder Forest and Nature School, please email [info@wildinwonderfs.ca](mailto:info@wildinwonderfs.ca).



# What will the children be doing?

"For a small child there is no division between playing and learning; between the things he or she does 'just for fun' and things that are 'educational.' The child learns while living and any part of living that is enjoyable is also play." ~ Penelope Leach

## CHILD-LED, EMERGENT CURRICULUM

Because forest school program learning is child-directed, the scope of the activities that can take place is enormous. Typical activities include:



Sensory walks

Sit spots

Foraging

Shelter building

Scavenger hunts

Tree climbing

Nature art

Animal tracking

Singing Songs

Listening to and telling stories

Playing games like hide and seek

Inventing new games

Studying insects

Flipping over rocks

Constructing fairy and gnome homes

Puddle jumping

Mud-pie making

Creating ephemeral art (temporary art with natural materials)

Building with loose parts

Pretending to be animals or magical beings

Tool use and whittling

Observing and creating patterns and mathematical concepts

Observing and creating alphabet letters and shapes



# What will the facilitator's role be?

"The very skilled educator knows when to offer insight, a question or materials to support a children's learning, but more importantly knows when to get out of the way."

-Jon Cree, UK Forest Association



## SPARKING ENGAGEMENT

By modelling enthusiasm for outdoor play and adventures facilitators encourage children who might be nervous or new to outdoor play. Facilitators act as the creative spark for the group, encouraging new ideas and making materials, resources and experiences available for children to expand their creative, imaginative and exploratory play. Facilitators get dirty, explore, create, build, learn and ask questions alongside the children.



## OBSERVING

Unstructured free play is the primary vehicle for learning. Our facilitators will help a child to see the play possibilities around them and then let their imaginations take off! Once the children are engaged in exploration, the facilitators step back to give the children the space to play and explore. Facilitators observe the children's interactions, interests and activities, and by collecting and documenting these we are able to use this knowledge to enhance and extend future learning.



## MANAGING RISK

The facilitator will ensure the children are physically safe and comfortable. Parents will ensure their child arrives promptly and is dressed appropriately. The facilitator will assess the overall safety of the site on a daily basis and manage risk for specific activities, which can change day to day, in collaboration with the children. Facilitators will aim to balance children's desire to experience and navigate risk in the natural environment with a concrete safety plan that has clear boundaries, emergency procedures and by maintaining a 1:6 child to adult ratio. See the Risk Management section for further information.



# Important Details

## PARKING, ARRIVAL & PICK-UP

**Miner's Path location:** Please park in the parking lot of Miner's Path upon arrival. Parents are to sign their child in with the facilitator and are to sign out and pick up their child promptly at the time the session ends. Children who are attending the after school program who will be picked up by the facilitator will be signed in by the facilitator and signed out by the parent or guardian upon pick up.

**Pass Powder Keg location:** Please park anywhere in the main parking lot of the Pass Powder Keg ski hill. Parents are to walk with their child to the yurt next to the lodge to meet the facilitator and sign their child in. Parents are to sign out their child with the facilitator at the yurt at the time the session ends.

## WASHROOMS

Participating children MUST be toilet-trained. Some flush toilets may be available depending on the season and location. There may be circumstances where children will be unable to use a flush toilet and will need to be comfortable using a Luggable Loo with a privacy tent or "Bush Peeing". We advise that your child use the toilet at home or at school before coming to forest school. If a child has an accident parents will be contacted to pick their child up.

## WEATHER GUIDELINES

Experiencing a wide variety of weather is an important part of the forest program experience. In case of inclement weather, sessions will be cancelled or shortened at the lead facilitator's discretion. Families will be contacted by text/phone call with as much notice as possible. In the event extreme weather arises during a forest school session, families will be contacted via text/phone call for immediate pick up.

## BACKPACK ESSENTIALS

Children are to come prepared with a small backpack that includes a water bottle, snacks to eat, a small towel, and an extra change of clothes (pants, shirt, socks, underwear).

Children may not share snacks. Groups will be informed of allergy concerns upon registration. We also strongly encourage participants to try to bring litter-less snacks in a bento-style box. In the case of snacks with garbage, a sealed container will be provided to ensure garbage does not end up as litter. During colder months, we also recommend packing dry snacks, as wet snacks can turn warm hands into cold ones very quickly. Please ensure extra snacks are packed in your child's lunch if they are attending the after school program.

# Important Policies

"There's no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing."

## DRESS FOR SUCCESS POLICY

Children should arrive at the program properly dressed for the weather. Please read this section carefully and refer to it often.

Clothing is one of the most important items you should invest in to keep your child comfortable at Wild in Wonder Forest and Nature School. Children that are consistently warm and dry throughout the program will be much happier and more likely to fully enjoy the benefits of learning in an outdoor environment than a child that comes unprepared for the day's weather and is cold and wet. Children should come to the program with sunscreen or bug repellent already applied as desired (except children attending the after school program who will be coming directly from school).

You don't have to invest in expensive brand names to keep warm. Thrift stores are great places to look for children and adult clothing at more affordable prices.

We suggest coming prepared each day with "**The Three Layered Approach**":

- 1. Base-layer:** this is the layer of clothing next to your skin. Natural fabrics such as wool or silk work well as an inner layer, as well as fleece. The key for this layer is to wick moisture away from the skin and insulate the skin with a breathable layer to keep them warm.
- 2. Mid-Layer:** this is another insulation layer that creates 'dead-air space' between your base-layer and the elements. This airspace helps in keeping your child warm. Wool sweaters (Merino wool is exceptionally warm and soft on sensitive skin) and fleece tend to work well.
- 3. Outer-layer:** this water-proof and wind-proof and breathable layer is you and your child's first line of defense against the elements. This is the layer worth investing in good quality items.

**CHOOSE APPROPRIATE FOOTWEAR.** Always wear closed-toe sturdy runners and boots. When it comes to boots you should get a boot that is one size larger than your child's foot. Again, this creates dead-air space to assist in insulation. Socks help to wick moisture away from the skin, (please note: cotton tends to sweat and doesn't do a great job at wicking-away moisture). The best foot insulator would be two pairs of wool socks with waterproof boots that have wiggle room.

**GLOVES ARE NOT RECOMMENDED.** They do not allow the child's body heat to help keep fingers warm. Waterproof mittens are best in winter with lighter mitts reserved for fall and spring.

# Important Policies

## REGISTRATION, PAYMENT, AND REFUND POLICIES

In order to participate, registration and payment must be completed in full prior to the start date of the program. Registration must be completed at [www.wildinwonderfs.ca](http://www.wildinwonderfs.ca) and payments can be sent by e-transfer to [info@wildinwonderfs.ca](mailto:info@wildinwonderfs.ca). Once registration and payment are complete, the program fee is non-refundable. If a child is withdrawn from a program due to illness, injury, expulsion, or any other reason a refund will not be issued. If a day's program must be cancelled due to insufficient staff or due to inclement weather, a make-up day will be scheduled. The only case in which a full refund will be issued is if the entire program is cancelled due to insufficient registration.

## PRIVACY POLICY

Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School will not identify or show photos of children's faces on any social media without expressed parental/guardian consent. In no circumstances will we 'tag' or mention individuals' names in social media posts. Upon registration, parents are provided with a Photograph-Video Release Form giving permission for Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School to use photographic or video images of participating children for the purpose of family communications and for publicly promoting, publicizing and advertising the program.

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School has both a Facebook and Instagram account where photos and stories are posted. Our Facebook page is Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School. On Instagram you'll find us at [wildinwonder\\_fs](https://www.instagram.com/wildinwonder_fs). Our privacy policy is in effect on our social media platforms.

## VOLUNTEERS/ACCOMPANYING ADULTS POLICY

The responsibilities of volunteers and/or accompanying adults will vary depending on the circumstances. A text message communication will be sent out to all families in the event there will be volunteers or accompanying adults participating in Forest School sessions. This communication will clarify what their roles and responsibilities will be in their participation at Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School. All volunteer/accompanying adults will be required to present a Vulnerable Sector Check to the primary facilitator prior to their participation.

# Important Policies

## ILLNESS POLICY

In order to ensure the health of our group, we ask that Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School participants stay home from our program if they have experienced any of the following symptoms in the past 24 hours:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Significant, unexplained rashes
- Significant cough
- General lethargy

In the case where one of the above illnesses occurs during the morning, the affected participants will be required to return home. Phone calls to parents/guardians and/or emergency contacts will be made so that the child can be picked up. Any participants affected by a communicable disease (such as measles, chickenpox, mumps, whooping cough, strep throat, influenza, viral pneumonia etc) are asked to stay home from Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School until their health care provider has communicated that it is safe for them to rejoin public programming.

## COMMUNICATION POLICIES

### **General Communication**

We believe that communication with our families is of vital importance to understanding the power of learning in the natural world. Please refer to the Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School Facebook and Instagram pages for ongoing updates about the children's activities and learning, and about how you can deepen/support their learning at home. Periodic blog posts will also be posted on the website [wildinwonderfs.com](http://wildinwonderfs.com) that will delve into specific learning that has occurred or different forest school topics the facilitator wants to explore. Our primary facilitator is also available to give a brief overview of your child's morning at pick up upon request.

Please contact us at [info@wildinwonderfs.ca](mailto:info@wildinwonderfs.ca) if you have any questions.

In the event of closure due to inclement weather that exceeds our weather policy, staff illness, or other unforeseen circumstances, families will be contacted by the lead facilitator by text or phone call.

### **Emergency Communication**

In the event of an emergency, families and/or emergency contacts will be contacted by phone. If an emergency vehicle is required, families and/or emergency contacts will be contacted after the emergency phone call has been made.

### **Grievance Policy**

We understand that there is a possibility concerns may arise in your child's participation at Wild in Wonder Forest & Natural School. We are committed to resolving any concerns as soon as possible. As such, please email us at [info@wildinwonderfs.ca](mailto:info@wildinwonderfs.ca) with a brief explanation of your concerns and your available times that week for a phone call meeting. You will receive a prompt response confirming a time and date for a meeting.

# Important Policies

## GENTLE DISCIPLINE POLICY

A sense of community is our most important asset at Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School. As a community, we will help the children to work together, to respect one another, and to value the ideas of others. As a group, we will work through any challenges that arise, ensuring that children's concerns are heard and their feelings are validated. We promote peaceful play, whereby the children are encouraged to speak to one another with kindness, compassion and empathy, building leadership skills and a sense of self-worth.

Our facilitators will prioritize gentle discipline practices, working with the principles of redirection, validation of the children's feelings and creating an empathetic environment.

Whenever possible, we will encourage discussion of any differences, so that the children can work on communicating their needs to each other and/or to a facilitator.

Our facilitators will make every effort to do the following when challenging interactions occur:

- Be proactive and observant. Take note of the social interactions between the children.
- Remain physically close to a child or children if concerned about a social or safety situation.
- Remind the children to use gentle (kind, respectful) words to ask for what they need.
- Remind the children that hands are for working and playing, not hitting.
- Redirect the children to different activities.
- Direct the child to speak with an adult who will help them recalibrate their feelings.
- Acknowledge children's feelings and encourage them to express them using "I statements".
- Encourage the child(ren) to consider alternative actions that they could take in the future and provide immediate positive feedback when they choose these alternative actions on their own.

If an unsafe or inappropriate behaviour does take place, the following steps will be taken:

- One facilitator will take the child aside from the group and the two will create a plan to understand and modify the behaviour.
- Facilitators will confer with one another to ensure consistent expectations and approaches for that individual.
- Parents/guardians will be informed of the situation that occurred by phone or in a discussion at the end of the session.
- Facilitators will work with parents to determine the potential cause of the situation and develop strategies to adjust the behaviour.

In extreme cases where a child's behaviour is consistently inappropriate or unsafe for the child, or for others, and after the above process has been implemented, the child may be required to have a support person in place, or may be asked to leave the program.

# Important Policies

## RISK MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### **RISKS**

Some of the risks inherent to the Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School program and outdoor play in general include, but are not limited to :

- Injuries from executing strenuous and demanding physical activities, possibly on uneven ground in the forest and pathways
- Slivers, scrapes, bruises, blisters
- Injuries or impacts from extreme cold or warm weather
- Contact with or discomforts from noxious plants
- The presence of wild animals, insects, mosquitoes and ticks

### **PARTICIPANT:STAFF RATIOS**

Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School will maintain a ratio of no more than 6 children : 1 facilitator. If the facilitators feel that a child requires additional support, they may request a meeting to prepare an appropriate plan. Our small ratios are important to the success of the program, the safety of the children, and the ability to facilitate the child-led learning approach in an outdoor environment. In the case that our ratios cannot be maintained for an unanticipated reason (illness, first aid emergency etc) we will contact families by phone/text to cancel/reschedule that day's session.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND FIRST AID**

Facilitators will carry a regularly stocked emergency kit at all times. Each of the facilitators will carry appropriate communication devices with emergency contact numbers, a whistle and a first aid kit at all times.

Each parent must ensure that the facilitators have appropriate emergency contact information. Our facilitators will carry a cell phone at all times to contact parents/guardians and/or EMS if required.

The facilitators will all maintain the following certifications:

- Current Criminal Record Check with a vulnerable sector check
- Current Standard First Aid/CPR

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School is committed to taking a proactive position in preventing child abuse. If child abuse or risk of child abuse is suspected by a Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School staff member, they will be responsible for immediately making a report to Child and Family Services. Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School staff take this responsibility seriously.



# Important Policies

## PLANNING, OBSERVATION, AND DOCUMENTATION POLICY

At Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School, any planning that is done by a facilitator in advance of a Forest School session is to support the expansion of a child's self-directed learning. Observation of a child's interests along with documenting through note-taking, pictures, and videos will help our facilitators be able to plan for ways in which a child may be able to further explore and inquire about a certain topic or interest. For example, if a child becomes curious about bugs, a facilitator may plan or prepare to bring bug books to the next session. As Forest & Nature School sessions are child-led, the end result of this type of planning is unpredictable. Children decide for themselves if they wish to explore what the facilitator has prepared for them.

As well as helping the facilitators prepare for extending and expanding learning, observation and documentation are also vital to communicating to families what children are experiencing and learning during their Forest School sessions.

## HANDTOOL USE POLICY

Prior to the introduction of hand tools, such as potato peelers, facilitators will conduct an assessment of group preparedness.

Tools will be stored and transported to each session in the facilitator's backpack. Children will not have access to the backpack, and tools are removed and put back by a responsible adult. An inventory of the tools will be checked at the beginning and end of each session to ensure that no tools are missing. The facilitators are responsible for cleaning and maintaining the tools after each use. Any defective tools will be removed immediately and replaced before they are used again. Hand tools will only be introduced to the children by a facilitator when the facilitator feels that the children understand how to use them safely. Introductions, demonstrations and work with hand tools will be done in 1:1 or 1:2 facilitator to child ratios. The facilitator will make sure that this area is always kept clear of dangers and tripping hazards and that the group understands the need to walk sensibly around the area or work.

## CAMPFIRE POLICY

Our firepit conforms to municipal guidelines and is a place for gathering, warmth and connection. Children will remain seated on the stumps while the fire is lit. A container of water will be on site, and at no time will children be left unattended while the fire is lit.

Educators will assess group dynamics and group preparedness, over time, prior to children participating in striking matches, adding fuel to the fire, roasting marshmallows, or dousing the fire. At the conclusion of each session, educators will ensure that the fire is fully extinguished.

# Important Policies

## **INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY POLICY**

Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School seeks to make Forest School sessions as inclusive and accessible as possible to all children regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, language, physical ability, or socioeconomic status. However, in the event that a facilitator feels there are barriers in a child being able to fully participate in the sessions, a conversation will be had with the parent or guardian to determine if accommodations are possible.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

At Wild in Wonder Forest & Nature School, we are committed to being aware of our ecological impact on the land and to being environmental stewards. As such, we will regularly conduct ecological impact assessments of our sites to ensure we are limiting denudation/erosion, compaction, pollution, and the corruption/introduction of species. Children will be involved in this process and in deciding when a particular spot needs a rest from human impact.